

ST. JOHN'S HOSPITAL AND SACRED HEART-GRIFFIN FORM PARTNERSHIP FOR SPORTS MEDICINE, WELLNESS AND HEALTH EDUCATION

SPRINGFIELD – St. John's Hospital and Sacred Heart-Griffin (SHG) High School today announced a long-term collaboration that will establish a new AthletiCare facility at the school's West Campus, offer the community greater access to a comprehensive array of health and wellness services, and provide students with educational opportunities in the health care industry.

“This relationship is an innovative approach to aligning the mutually consistent faith-based visions of St. John's and Sacred Heart-Griffin through the development of a comprehensive sports medicine program, educational opportunities, and wellness services on the high school's campus,” said Bob Ritz, CEO and President of St. John's Hospital.

“Health care is one of the fastest growing professions in our country. This partnership positions SHG and St. John's to be the leaders in preparing high school students for health related careers. SHG and St. John's will help students realize their potential and achieve their dreams by providing unique health related experiences in a classroom setting,” said Sr. Katherine O'Connor, O.P., President of Sacred Heart-Griffin High School.

Under the partnership, St. John's will locate a 3,800 square foot AthletiCare facility at SHG's West Campus on the Washington Street side of the high school's expansion. The new AthletiCare clinic will serve patients from throughout the region and have a separate entrance and dedicated signage. The facility will provide patients and SHG student athletes with licensed physical therapy services, athletic trainer support services, and part-time access to on-site orthopedic surgeons from local medical practices. The clinic will have on-site computerized x-ray capabilities, as well as traditional therapy modalities.

With the new facility, SHG students, parents and staff and St. John's staff will have access to a comprehensive array of health and wellness services. These services will be provided through a partnership between St. John's, Prairie Heart Institute's Center for Living and local FitClub facilities. Targeted wellness programming will be designed for age-appropriate audiences and will include smoking cessation, diet, exercise, stress management, and cancer awareness curriculum.

This new collaboration will also provide SHG students with opportunities to gain exposure to the health care industry. On-site educational programming will be developed collaboratively by St. John's staff and SHG faculty to provide students with hands-on, immersive, healthcare experience. Through these courses, students could work closely with clinicians and participate in on-going seminars regarding careers in health care. The courses will also increase awareness regarding key issues in medical technology, healthcare practice, policy and, education. College credit courses will be offered to students, allowing them to study healthcare related topics at an advanced level. Additionally, a healthcare related mentorship program could be developed to provide select students with a greater level of involvement and support as they explore health care careers and interests.

“We are already experiencing a nationwide shortage of nurses, physical therapists and other clinicians, and it's only going to worsen in the years ahead. We must have programs in place to encourage young people to enter careers in the medical field. This collaboration is another example of how we can achieve that goal,” added Ritz.

Construction on the new AthletiCare West Campus facility is scheduled to begin along with the renovation and construction at West Campus when SHG has raised 75% of its \$8 million goal.